

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AGR-05

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CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 STR-04 IO-10 /103 W

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FM AMCONSUL HERMOSILLO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 808

INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS : PINT, PORS, MX

SUBJECT : POLITICAL UPHEAVAL IN SONORA

REF: HERMOSILLO 317& 319; MEXICO 9444

1. THE DISMISSAL SATURDAY OCTOBER 25 OF ELECTED GOVERNOR CARLOS ARMANDO BIEBRICH TORRES, AND HIS REPLACEMENT THE SAME DAY BY ECHEVERRIA APPOINTEE ALEJANDRO CARRILLO MARCOR, MARKED THE BEGINNING OF A BROAD POLITICAL UPHEAVAL IN SONORA WHICH IS A LONG WAY FROM HAVINGRUN RPT RUN ITS COURSE. THE APPARENT LOSERS, AS RESULT OF THE CHARGES, ARE FIRSTLY BIEBRICH HIMSELF, AND SECONDLY THE CONSERVATIVE, U.S. ORIENTED AGRI-CULTURAL AND BUSINESS OLIGARCHY OF SONORA. BIEBRICH A BARE MONTH AGO WAS VIEWED WIDELY, AT LEAST IN SONORA, AS THE PROSPECTIVE RIGHT-HAND MAN TO THE MAN GENERALLY CONSIDERED AS FRONT-RUNNER FOR THE PRI NOMINATION FOR THE PRESIDENCY, MOYA PALENCIA; AS THE LIKELY SECRETARY OF GOBERNACION IN THE NEXT ADMINISTRATION; AND AS A STRONG CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT IN 1982. TODAY, THREE DAYS LATER, ONLY MENTION OF BIEBRICH IN HERMOSILLO PRESS IS ARTICLE QUOTING CCI LEADER ALFONSO GARZON SANTIBANEZ AS SAYING HE WILL DEMAND PRISON FOR BIEBRICH "IF HE IS GUILTY OF THE SLAUGHTER HE WILL

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PAY FOR RPT FOR IT".

2. SOME BUSINESSMEN, FARMERS AND RANCHERS CONCERNED THAT A MORE (SPEEDED-UP) SETTLEMENT OF LAND REFORM RPT REFORM CASES WILL BE BASED MORE ON POLITICAL EXPEDIENCY THAN ON RESPECT FOR LAW AND CONSTITUTION, OR ON ANY SORT OF SOUND ECONOMIC GROUNDS. IT IS AGREED THERE ARE NUMBER OF LARGE LAND HOLDINGS IN THIS STATE, WHICH CAMPESINOS WOULD LIKE TO SEE DIVIDED-UP. HOWEVER, AMONG THEM ARE SOME OF THE MOST EFFICIENT AND PRODUCTIVE AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISES IN MEXICO, AND IF THEY ARE EXPROPRIATED AND BROKEN UP, CROP YIELDS ARE BELIEVED CERTAIN TO SUFFER.

3. MANNER OF BIEBRICH REMOVAL GENERALLY BELIEVED TO INDICATE IT WAS PERSONAL DECISION OF PRESIDENT, WHO MAY HAVE BEEN MAINLY MOTIVATED BY FOLLOWING FACTORS: A) TO STRIKE AT MOYA PALENCIA THROUGH HIS ONE-TIME PROTEGE, AND THUS AT THE CONSERVATIVE ELEMENTS WITHIN THE PRI WHO HAVE BEEN NOTABLY STRONG IN SONORA; B) TO APPEASE THE PRESENT AND RPT PEASANT AND FARM WORKERS ORGANIZATIONS LEADERS, WHOSE CONTINUED SUPPORT AND THE VOTES OF WHOSE FOLLOWERS WILL BE VITAL TO THE PRI IN A PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION YEAR; C) PERHAPS, TO HEAD OFF THREATENED LAND SEIZURES, CONSEQUENT EVICTIONS, AND POSSIBLE VIOLENCE IN OTHER PARTS OF MEXICO.

4. WHOLESALE CHANGE IN THE STATE GOVERNMENT CURRENTLY UNDERWAY. FOUR CHANGES INCLUDING STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL, AND STATE TREASURER, ANNOUNCED LATE LAST NIGHT. APPOINTMENT OF A NEW SECRETARY GENERAL (EQUAL TO LT. GOVERNOR) SAID TO BE IMMINENT. MAYOR OF NAVOJOA, WHO CALLED AT CONGEN THIS MORNING, AND IS FRIEND AND CONTEMPORARY FROM SAHUARIPA (SONORA) OF BIEBRICH, TOLD ME SITUATION IN HIS CITY FORTY MILES SOUTH OF CIUDAD OBREGON, IS CALM. HE EXPECTS ALL BIEBRICH APPOINTEES TO STATE POSTS TO BE CHANGED, AND ADDED THAT IN ADDITION MAYORS OF CIUDAD OBREGON AND GUAYMAS ARE CERTAIN TO GO. MEANWHILE GOVERNOR CARRILLO MARCOR FOUND IT NECESSARY TO MAKE A DECLARATION TO PRESS THAT "I AM NOT COMMUNIST, IAM NATIONALIST AND MEXICAN" IN RESPONSE TO RUMORS RAMPART IN THIS AREA THAT HE WAS SENT HERE TO INSTALL AN EXTREME LEFT ORIENTED REGIME. HE CLARIFIED HIS ONE TIME ASSOCIATION WITH POPULAR SOCIALIST PARTY AS BEING A SIX MONTH PERIOD OF COOPERATION
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WHILE HE REMAINED A MEMBER OF THE PRI.

5. THERE IS CONCERN IN HERMOSILLO THAT UNIVERSITY OF SONORA MAY AGAIN BE SITE OF CONFLICT. EXTREMIST MILITANTS AMONG THE STUDENTS HAVE CALLED FOR A MASS MEETING OF PROTEST THIS EVENING AGAINST BIEBRICH, THE RECTOR, THE VESTED INTERESTS, ETC. OVER THE "MASSACRE" OF SAN IGNACIO. A COMMITTEE FOR THE DEFENSE OF UNIVERSITY ORDER HAS BEEN FORMED TO REJECT

THE PROVOCATIONS OF THE ORGANIZERS OF THE MEETING. THE
TWO MAY CLASH.

5. MEANWHILE, FORMER GOVERNOR BIEBRICH HAS MOVED OUT OF THE
GOVERNOR'S MANSION (ACROSS STREET FROM RPT FROM MY RESIDENCE)
IS SAID TO BE WORKING ON HIS PAPERS, AND ACCORDING TO A CLOSE
FRIEND WILL PROCEED SOON TO MEXICO CITY WITH HIS WIFE.
IN FOUR TO SIX WEEKS HE PLANS TO RETURN TO HERMOSILLO, FOR
THE EXPECTED BIRTH HERE OF THEIR FOURTH CHILD. HIS OTHER
PLANS ARE UNCERTAIN, OR AT LEAST UNKNOWN. I HAVE REQUESTED
AUDIENCE WITH HIS SUCCESSOR, BUT DO NOT ANTICIPATE RECEIV-
ING AN APPOINTMENT VERY SOON. GOVERNOR CARRILLO MARCOR IS
WORKING EIGHTEEN HOURS A DAY, APPEASING THE ANGRY CAMPESINOS
AND ORGANIZING HIS ADMINISTRATION.

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